and upgradation of the sector.

(iii) Weaving processing and garment machinery, which are covered under TUFS, have been extended the facility of accelerated depreciation at the rate of 50%. Cost of machinery has also been reduced through Fiscal Policy measures. This further encourages modernisation.

(iv) With a view to encourage backward integration, the custom duty on shuttleless looms has been brought from 15% to 5%.

(v) National Institute for Fashion Technology (NIFT) its six branches and Apparel Training & Design Centres (ATDCs) are running various courses/programmes to meet skilled manpower requirements of textile industry especially apparel in the field of design, merchandising and marketing.

(vi) Facilities by way of eco-testing laboratories have been created to enable exporters to get the textile products pre-tested for conforming to the requirements of importing countries.

(vii) The Government has launched a centrally sponsored scheme titled "Apparel Park for Export Scheme" for imparting focused thrust for setting up of apparel manufacturing units of international standards at potential growth centres and to give fillip to exports.

(viii) For upgrading infrastructure facilities at important textile centers, a scheme 'Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme' (TCIDS) has been lunched.

Projects under DHPY in Kerala

2531. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) How many projects under Deendayal Hathkargha Protsahan yojana have been sanctioned in Kerala, the district-wise details thereof;

(b) the amount released by Government for these projects so far, and whether all these projects have started functioning;

(c) whether any proposal requesting financial assistance has been received from the Government of Kerala to start fresh projects; and;

(d) if so, the action taken by Government in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI BASAN GOUDA R. PATIL): (a) Under the Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protshan Yojana (DDHPY) 53 projects have been sanctioned so far to the Government of Kerala to be implemented in the following districts:-

S.No.	Name of the district	Projects sanctioned
1	Kollam	29
2	Kottayam	2
3	Ernakulam	6
4	Thrissur	7
5	Kozhikode	9
	Total	53

(b) Out of the total Central share of Rs. 123.82 lakh, the Government of India has released Rs. 61.44 lakh so far for implementation of 53 projects. As reported by the Government of Kerala, out of 53 projects, implementation has commenced in respect of 38 projects.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. 17 projects have been received from the Government of Kerala on 4.8.2003 and 32 on 07.08.03. Out of these, 38 projects found to be in conformity with the guidelines are being processed for sanction. Remaining 11 projects have been returned back to the Government of Kerala for necessary rectification.

Persons Involved in Handloom Industry in A.P.

2532. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that more than five lakh persons are involved in handloom industry in the State of Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) if so, what measures Government have taken for the welfare of these persons and for the overall development of handloom sector in the State?